

LEADERSHIP PROFILE



Executive Director
Grove Park Foundation
Atlanta, Georgia

Revitalizing the Grove Park neighborhood and improving the quality of life by working with local partners, leaders and residents to create a healthy, equitable and vibrant community.

– Mission of Grove Park Foundation

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY



Grove Park is a strong, historic Westside Atlanta neighborhood at an inflection point.

After decades of race-based disinvestment, [Grove Park](#) is transforming. The [Westside Park](#) opens this year. Microsoft has acquired 90 acres and announced plans for thousands of jobs in the community. As new residents, investors and businesses arrive, Grove Park is beginning to experience intense market forces and gentrification.

[Grove Park Foundation](#) (GPF) is an independent nonprofit supporting community-centered revitalization. Since its inception in 2015, GPF has worked with local partners, leaders and residents to overcome longterm inequities and create the conditions for Grove Park children and families of color to achieve economic mobility, racial equity, and better health, education and housing outcomes. GPF has raised more than \$20 million, and leveraged over \$50 million in additional resources, to open a new K-8 academy, a YMCA and health clinic, and to begin construction of mixed income housing. Its programs and initiatives have reached thousands of residents. GPF is a [Purpose Built Communities](#) Network Member, and is focused on quality of life and ladders of opportunity for existing Grove Park residents.

Grove Park Foundation is poised to enter a promising next phase of work. GPF's visionary founding Executive Director Debra Edelson plans to depart in

late August. The new Executive Director has a bold, exciting mandate: to lead GPF's next era of partnership, investment and contribution to the Grove Park neighborhood, in collaboration with the community and a broad, diverse, expanding circle of stakeholders, funders and partners.

The new Executive Director will build on an exceptionally productive startup phase of work.

Through the work of GPF and its partners, the community is now served by a new K-8 school in the KIPP Woodson Academy, a new YMCA offering quality early learning, and a healthcare clinic run by Whiteford Inc. Construction is underway on 110 affordable housing units. In the current 2021-25 plans, a vibrant Main Street is envisioned, including renovation of the historic Grove Theater into an arts and wellness hub.



GPF has developed programs that are helping to stabilize and sustain hundreds of residents in their homes, and to access educational and economic opportunities. Hundreds of residents are participating in financial capacity building, job training and placement, renter and home ownership education, home repair projects and small business-building initiatives.

The ED will lead, resource and execute a holistic next phase of programs, plans and priorities. The ED will facilitate GPF and the community to plan and achieve new successes, and to grapple with questions such as:

- How can GPF and other partners work to mitigate displacement of existing residents as real estate values and taxes increase and gentrification occurs?
- How can GPF's work foster collaboration and integrated results aligned with existing residents' needs and potential?
- How can GPF help existing residents and homeowners capture earned wealth, and better quality of life, as neighborhood investment increases?
- How can GPF help facilitate Grove Park community aspirations as the surrounding landscape changes rapidly?

Grove Park Foundation has three driving priorities:

- *Creating equitable access to opportunity for all residents of Grove Park.*
 - *Supporting a healthy and flourishing community.*
 - *Empowering a racially and economically inclusive neighborhood.*
-

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MANDATE

The Executive Director will shape and lead the next phase of work for Grove Park Foundation. The ED will be a magnetic, strategic leader who thinks holistically about the future and brings people together to imagine, plan and implement in ways that inspire commitment and support. The ED will be a frontline fundraiser, ambassador and relationship builder with experience in complex community-centered contexts. The ED will have cross-sectoral experience and a record of relevant results. In partnership with an engaged, mission-focused Board of Directors and staff, the ED will:

- 1. Lead strategy, funding, focus and implementation of GPF's next phase.** The ED will guide a holistic, collaborative and inclusive process to plan multi-year implementation of goals and funding. Next programs and priorities will advance housing, economic and workforce development for the residents of Grove Park, and continue to enhance education, health, well-being and quality of life revitalization. The ED will focus, facilitate and resource "phase two" work, in collaboration with the Board, the community and numerous partners.
- 2. Build relationships, collaboration and trust.** The ED will have authentic depth, experience, courage and humility essential to advancing racial equity, inclusion and community work. The ED will create collaborative, trusting relationships with the Board, staff, residents, funders, volunteers, donors and partners across and beyond the Grove Park community.
- 3. Grow and diversify resources.** The ED will be an experienced, passionate fundraiser and builder of resources. The ED will have proven success in government, foundation and corporate partnerships, capital campaigns, major and individual donor fundraising, and diverse types of funding. The ED will be strategic and proactive about cultivating, diversifying and increasing support and funding opportunities. The ED will help leverage emerging interest and investments in Grove Park for the benefit of the community and its residents.
- 4. Enhance GPF's reputation and value proposition.** The ED will be a compelling listener and communicator who is active and visible in Grove Park and throughout the Atlanta community. The ED and other staff members will be regular participants at community gatherings, as listeners, communicators, resources and thought partners. The ED will raise awareness of GPF's purpose, work and value to the community, and will enhance GPF's influence and impact.
- 5. Manage the staff, organization and work of GPF.** The ED will be a strategic, engaged and innovative manager of the team and the business. The ED will develop talent, infrastructure and sustainability, and will foster a culture of teamwork, compassion and accountability. The ED will have business and financial savvy, operational, delegation and organizational skills. The ED will manage a young, growing, entrepreneurial organization to thrive within a changing Atlanta landscape.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS



The ideal Executive Director is an experienced builder of relationships, resources and community. The ED will be an outstanding collaborator, leader and manager with demonstrated results advancing racial equity and justice. The ED will be passionate about the mission and potential of the Grove Park community, Grove Park Foundation, and the greater Atlanta community. Personal assets being sought include:

- **Credibility:** An authentic, energizing leader who builds trust and engagement.
- **Strategic leadership:** Fosters strategic, inclusive decision making that results in clear vision, priorities and actions.
- **Relationship and connecting skills:** Builds relationships with diverse stakeholders. Models self-confidence *and* humility. Has a sense of humor.
- **Fundraising acumen:** Expertise and passion to increase funding and philanthropic support.
- **Diversity, equity and inclusion:** Demonstrated racial equity and justice commitment, lens and results at staff, community and stakeholder levels.
- **Communication skills:** Actively listens, synthesizes and communicates in ways that are clear, engaging and persuasive.
- **Bridge building and collaboration:** Empowers, unifies and inspires people to work together. Able to build consensus, make tough decisions as needed, and manage complicated external dynamics.
- **Manages people, the work and change:** Able to manage and lead organizational development and change. Adaptive financial, business and leadership skills, personal resilience and tenacity. Change-management and culture-building experience.
- **Innovation:** Open to new ideas, and a source of creative solutions. An entrepreneurial spirit and the courage to take smart risks.
- **Organizational skills:** Able to plan and structure teams, holistic strategic direction and priorities, projects and processes.

THE ORGANIZATION

The [Grove Park](#) area, developed on Atlanta's Westside in the 1920s and 30s, fell on hard times in the 60s due to white flight to the suburbs.

Disinvestment destabilized the neighborhood. Longstanding businesses closed, unemployment rose and foreclosures blighted the area. For decades, the neighborhood experienced steady declines in investment, population, property conditions and the local economy. Median household income in 2009 was \$31K versus \$50K for the city of Atlanta as a whole. Today, about half of Grove Park families live on \$28K or less per year.

Recently, conditions in Grove Park have changed. Proposed development plans have spurred new investment, and in-town living has regained popularity. [Westside Park](#), located within the neighborhood, is set to open this year and will be Atlanta's largest greenspace. In February 2021, [Microsoft announced the purchase](#) of 90 acres and plans to develop a campus and create thousands of jobs. Timing and plans are not yet certain.



[Grove Park Foundation](#) is an independent nonprofit founded in 2015, and a [Purpose-Built Communities Network Member](#). GPF's mission is to foster the revitalization of Grove Park, prioritizing the needs, interests and livelihoods of longterm residents who currently live in the neighborhood. All Purpose Built Communities share the overarching mission to break the cycle of generational poverty.

In six years, working with numerous programmatic, educational, housing, nonprofit and funding partners, the Grove Park Foundation raised over \$70 million in direct and indirect resources, resulting in investments and programs that include:

- Construction of the new KIPP K-8 Woodson Park Academy, set to welcome 900 students. The school was built with over 40% minority business participation.
- Construction of a YMCA early learning center that hosts a community health facility operated by Whitefoord Inc.
- The N.O.W. Financial Capability Program, which fosters financial literacy, job training, credit repair and small business development.
- Construction of Canopy at Grove Park, a 110 mixed-income family development, projected for completion in December.
- The purchase, assemblage and early visioning of a Grove Park "Main Street." The revitalization of the historic Grove Park Theater as a neighborhood gathering place for arts and wellness will provide a marquee centerpiece for this effort.

A five-year plan developed in 2020 outlines “phase two” of GPF’s work. Grove Park Foundation staff and Board set forth plans that are guiding current and next initiatives, and a Community Advisory Council is being formed. Current strategic priorities and desired outcomes are:



1. Affordable Housing Fund (2021-2025):

- Purchase and rehab/construction of 100 single family homes for sale at 80% AMI and below
- Establishment and seeding of a Community Land Trust, driven by community participation to ensure permanent affordability of SF units
- Anti-displacement Fund: critical home repair, tax abatement, wills/estate planning, and legal/lien relief for legacy residents
- Development of scattered small multi-family rental projects
- Capacity building, program staffing and overhead for the land trust and GPF for 3 years.

2. N.O.W. Financial Mobility Program:

- N.O.W. offers free financial literacy, budgeting, job training, housing readiness, business development skills and education to move residents toward living wage jobs and a sustainable income.
- Free to 30318 and some 30314 residents
- Trainings offered by HUD certified and qualified partners
- GPF role is to market, recruit, intake, triage to partners, track and monitor, and raise all funds.

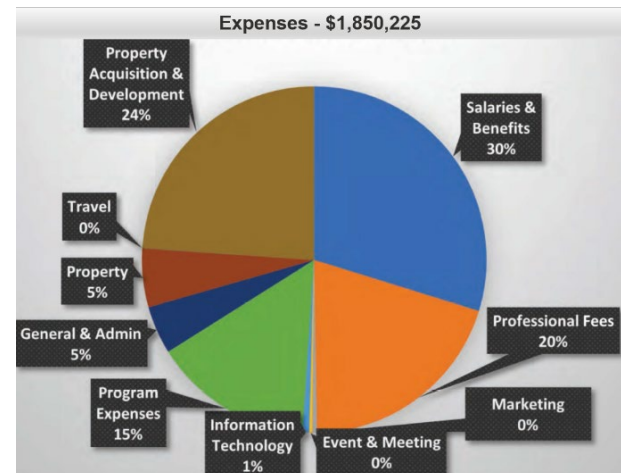
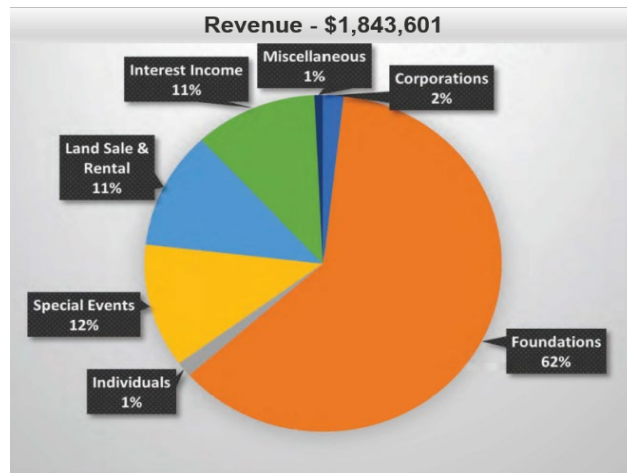
3. Main Street and Theater Revitalization (2021-2024):

- Create vision and path to redevelopment of place, at the heart of community, that is walkable with affordable retail services
- Grove Theater as marquee feature: a place of arts, wellness, education and gathering. Two black female arts and wellness anchor tenants are identified.
- Main Street investments in demolition, beautification, safety.
- Opportunities for neighborhood/minority-owned business ownership and employment



During the pandemic, GPF has served the community with an Emergency Rent and Utility relief program that has supported nearly 400 households. GPF has helped offer testing and vaccination sites and provision of masks. These initiatives are continuing in 2021.

Grove Park Foundation has an annual operating budget of \$1.8 million, supported primarily by foundations and corporate support. Philanthropy, interest income and revenue from land sales and rentals provide additional operating support. In its six-year history, GPF has raised capital support of \$22 million and leveraged over \$50 million in additional contributions.



THE RELATIONSHIPS

The Executive Director manages a staff of 11, including full-time (5), part-time (2), grant-funded (2) and on-loan (2) team members. The ED's current direct reports are the Chief Operating Officer (on loan from Bank of America), the Chief Financial Officer (part-time), the Development Director and the Director of Outreach (on loan from Zeist Foundation).

THE LOCATION

Grove Park Foundation is located on Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway in the Grove Park neighborhood in the Westside/Bankhead area of Atlanta, Georgia.

Grove Park Foundation is an equal opportunity employer, and a diverse slate of compelling candidates is being sought.

**For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect,
please email**

GroveParkFoundation@BoardWalkConsulting.com

or call

**Kathy Bremer or Diane Westmore
at 404-BoardWalk (404-262-7392).**

For the current status of this and other searches, please visit

www.BoardWalkConsulting.com